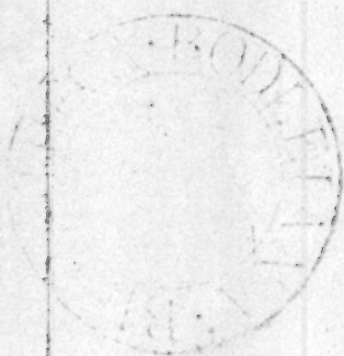


THE MERRY TALES OF THE MAD-MEN OF GOTTAM.

Gathered together by *A B.* of Physicke Docto



Printed at London by *B. A.* and *T. F.* for *Micha*
Sparks, dwelling in *Greene Arber* at the signe of
the *Blue-Bible*, 1630.





Here beginneth certaine merry Tales of
the Mad-men of Gottaix.

The first Tale.



There was two men of Gottaix, and the one of them was going to the Market to Pottingham to buy sheepe, and the other came from the Market: and both met together vpon Pottinghams bridge: Well met said the one to the other: whither be ye going: Said he that came from Pottingham. Marry, said he that was going thither, I goe to the market to buy sheepe. Buy sheepe said the other, and which way wilt thou bring them home: marry said the other, I will bring them over this bridge: By Robin hood said he that came from Pottingham, but thou shalt not. By Maidmarrian, said he that was going thitherward, but I will. Thou shalt not, said

the one. I will, said the other. Ter here, said the one: Shue there, said the other. Then they beate their staves against the ground, one against the other, as there had bene an hundred sheepe betweene them. Hold in, said the one. Beware by leaping ouer the brydge of my sheepe, said the other. I care not, said the other, they shall not come this way, said the one: But they shall, said the other. When said the other, & if that thou make me y^e to doe. I will put my finger in thy mouth. A fard thou wilt, said the other. And as they were at their contention, another man of Gictam came from the market with a sacke of meale vpon a horse. and seeing and hearing his neighbours at strife for sheepe, and none betwixt them, said, Ah fooles, will you neuer learn wit? Helpe me, said he that had the meale, and lay my sack vpon my shoulder, they did so. And he went to the one side of the brydge, and vnloosed the mouth of the sacke, and did shake out all his meale into the Riuer. Now neighbours said the man, how much meale is there in my sacke now? Harry there is none at all, said they. Now by my faith said he, euen as much wit is in your two heads, to strue for that thing you haue not.

Which was the wisest of all these three persons, iudge you?

The

The second Tale.

There was a man of Gottom who did ride to the market with two bushells of wheate, and because his horse should not beare heavy, he carried his coine upon his owne necke, & did ride upon his horse, because his horse should not carry to heavy a burthen. Judge you which was the wisest, his horse or himselfe.

The third Tale.

On a time the men of Gottom would have pinned in the Cuckoo, whereby they should sing all the yeere, and in the midst of y^e town they made a hedge round in compasse, and they had got a Cuckoo, and had put her into it, and said. Sing here all the yeere, and thou shalt lacke neither meat nor drinke. The Cuckoo as soone as she perceiued her selfe incompassed within the hedge flew away. A vengeance on her said they, we made not our hedge high enough.

The fourth Tale.

There was a man of Gottom, the which went to the market to Pottingham to sell Cheese, and as he was going downe the hill to

Pottingham-bridge, one of his Cheeses did fall
 out of his wallet and ran downe the hill. A whoz-
 sons said the fellow, can you run to the Market
 alone? I will send the one after the other of
 you. Then he layd downe his wallet, and tooke
 the Cheeses, and did tumble them downe the hill
 one after another, and some ran into one bush,
 and some into another. And at the last he said,
 I charge you all meet me in the Market-place.
 And when the fellow came into the Market-
 place to meet his Cheeses, he stayed there till the
 Market was almost done. Then he went about
 and did enquire of his Neighbors and other men,
 if they did see his Cheeses come to the Market?
 Who should bring them, said one of the Market-
 men? Harry themselves said the fellow, they
 knew the way well enough. He said a venge-
 ance on them all, I did feare to see my Cheeses
 run so fast, that they would run beyond the mar-
 ket: I am now fully perswaded that they be
 now almost at Pozke. Whereupon he forthwith
 hired a horse to ride after to Pozke to seeke his
 Cheeses, where they were not. But to this day
 no man could tell him of his Cheeses.

The fift Tale.

There was a man of Goffam, who bought
 at Pottingham a Treuet or a Brandizon,
 and

and as he was going home, his shoulders grew
 soze with the cariage thereof, & he set it downe,
 and saying that it had thre feet, said, a whosoer
 hath thou thre feet and I but two: thou shalt
 beare me home if thou wilt, and so set it downe
 on the ground, and sat himselfe downe thereupo
 on, and said to the Treenet, heare me as long as
 I haue bove the, for if thou doe not thou shalt
 stand still for me. The man of Cottam did see
 that his Treenet would not goe further, stand
 still, said he, in the Dares name, and follow me
 if thou wilt, I will tell thee the right way to my
 home. When he did come home to his house,
 his wife said, where is my Treenet? The man
 said, he hath thre legs and I haue but two, and
 I did teach him the way to my house, let him
 come home if he will. Where left ye the Treenet
 said the wife? At Cottam hill said the man.
 The wife did runne and fetch home the Treenet
 her owne selfe, or else she had lost it through her
 husbands wit.

The sixt Tale.

There dwelt a Smith at Cottam, who had
 a Waspes nest in the straw in the end of
 his Forge, there did come one of his neighbors
 to haue his horse shod, and the Waspes were so
 hute, that the fellow was stung with a Wasp.

he being angry, said, art thou worthy to keepe a Forge or no, to haue men stung here with wasps? A neighbour, said the Smith, be content I will put them from this nest by and by, immediately he took a Coulter, and heated it in his Forge glowing hot, and he thrust it in to the straw in the end of his Forge, and so he set his Forge a fire, burnt it vp. Then said the Smith, and I told thee I would fire them forth of their nest.

The seauenth Tale.

Vhen that good-Friday was come, the men of Gottam did cast their heads together what to do with their white Herrings, their red Herring, their Sprats and salt fish: One consulted with the other, and agreed that such fish should be cast into their Pond or pule (the which was in the middle of the Towne) that it might increase against the next yeere. Every man that had any fish left, did cast them into the Pule. The one said I haue thus many white Herrings: another said, I haue thus many Sprats: another said, I haue thus many red Herrings: and the other said, I haue thus many salt fishes. Let all goe together into the Pule or Pond, and we shall fare like Lords the next Lent: at the beginning of the next Lent

following, the men did wain the Ponde to haue
their fish, and there was nothing but a great
Cele.

Ah said they all, a mischeife on this Cele, for
he hath eate vp all our fish. What shall we
doe with him, said the one to the other? Kill
him, said the one of them, chop him all to pieces
said another. Nay, not so, said the other, Let
vs drowne him: be it so, said all.

They went to another Pale or Ponde by,
and did cast in the Cele into the water. I ye
there said they, and Shift for thy selfe, for no
helpe thou shalt haue of vs. And there they left
the Cele to be drownd.

The eight Tale.

One time the men of Cottam had forgotte
ten to pay their rent to their Landlord.
The one said to the other; Tomorrow is our
pay day, and what remedy shall we find to send
our money to our Lord. The one said, this day
I haue taken a quicke hare, and he shall carry
it, for he is light of foot: Be it so said all, he shall
haue a Letter and a purse to put in our money,
and wee shall direct him the ready way, and
when the Letters were written, and the money
put in a Purse, they did tye them about the
Hares necks, saying; First, thou must goe to
Lough.

Loughbozow, and then to Leicester, and at ~~Pe~~
 warke there is our Lord, and commend vs to
 him, and there is his dutie. The Hare as soone
 as he was out of their hands, he did run a cleane
 contrary way: some cried to him, saying, thou
 must goe to Loughbozow first, some said, let the
 Hare alone, hee can tell a nearer way then the
 best of vs all doe, let him goe: another said, it is
 a subtle Hare let her alone, she will not keepe the
 highway for feare of dogs.

The niath Tale.

OP a time there was one of Cottam was
 a mowing in the meads, and found a great
 Grasshopper: he cast downe his sithe, and did
 run home to his neighbours and said, that there
 was a Diuell in the field that hopped in the
 Grasse: then there was euery man ready with
 Clubs and Stanes, with Halberts and other
 weapons to goe and kill the Grasshopper: when
 they did come to the place where the Gras-
 hopper should be, said the one to the other, let
 euery man crosse himselfe from the Diuell, or
 we will not meddle with him. And so they re-
 turned againe, and said, we were well blest
 this day that we went no further. Ah cowards
 said he that had the Sithe in the mead. Helpe
 me to fetch my Sithe: No, said they, it is good

to sleepe in a whole skin, better it is to lose the
 withe, than to marre vs all.

The tenth Tale.

O A certaine time there were xij. men of
 Gottom that did goe a fishing, and some
 did wade in the water, and some stood vpon dry
 land, and when that they went homeward, one
 said to the other, we haue ventured wonder-
 full hard this day in loading. I pray God that
 none of vs that did come from home be drow-
 ned. Parry said the one to the other, let vs see
 that, for there did twelue of vs come out: and
 they told themselves, and euery man did tell
 eleuen, and the twelfth man did neuer tell him-
 selfe. Mas said the one to the other: There is
 one of vs drowned. They went backe to the
 Brooke where that they had bene fishing, and
 sought vp and downe for him that was drow-
 ned, and did make great lamentation. A Cour-
 tier did come riding by, and he did aske what
 it was they did seeke, and why they were so
 sorry? D, said they, this day we went to fish in
 this Brooke, and there did come out twelue of
 vs, and one is drowned. Why said the Cour-
 tier, tell how many be of you. And the one told
 eleuen, and he did not tell himselfe. Well, said
 the Courtier, what will you giue me, and I will
 Ande

And out twelue men? Sir, said they, all the money that we haue. Giue me the money, said the Courtier : and hee began with the first and did giue him a recombendibus ouer the shoulders that he groaned, and said, there is one : so he serued all, that they groaned on the matter : when he did come to the last, he payed him a good, saying. Here is the twelfth man. Gods blessings on your heart said all the company, that you haue found out our neighbour.

The eleuenth Tale.

There was a man of Bottam that did ride vpon the high way, and there he found a Chæse, and he puld out his sword, & pozed and pricked with the poynt of his sword to take vp the Chæse. There did come another man by and did alight, and tooke vp the Chæse, and did ride his way with it. The man of Bottam did ride backe to Nottingham to buy a long sword to take vp the Chæse, and when he had bought his sword, he returned backe, and when he did come to the place where the Chæse did lye, he pulled out his sword, and pricked the ground saying, A murriou take it, if I had had this sword. I had had the Chæse my selfe, and now another hath got it.

The

The twelfth Tale.

There was a man of Goffam, and he did not loue his wife: and hauing a faire haire, her husband said diuers times. That he would cut it off, and he durst not doe it when she was waking but when she was a slepe. So on a night he tooke vp a paire of sheeres, and layed them vnder his beds head, the which his wife perceiued. And then she did call to her one of her maids, and said; Goe to bed to my husband, for he is minded to cut off my haire to night: let him cut off thy haire, and I will giue thee as good a kertle as euer thou didst weare: the maid did so, and fained her selfe asleepe, the which the man perceiued, cut off the maids haire, and did wzap it about his sheeres, and laid it vnder his beds head and fell asleepe. The wise made her maid to rise, and tooke the haire and the sheeres, and went into the hall, and their burnt y haire. The man had a horse the which he did loue above all things (as shee did well know.) The good wise went into her husbands stable and cut off the horse taile, and did wzap the sheeres in the horse taile, and laid them vnder her husbands head. In the morning shee did rise betimes, and did sit by the fire kembering of her head. At last the man did come to the fire
and

and seeing of his wife kembing of her head, marvelled much thereat: The Waide seeing her Master standing in a brydome study, said, what a dinell ailes the horse in the stable, for he bleedeth sore: The good man ranne into the stable, and found that his horse taile was cut off: he went to his beds head, and did find the sheeres wrapt in his horse taile, and did come to his wife, saying, I cry thee mercy, for I had thought that I had cut off thy haire to night. and I haue cut off my horse taile. Yea, said she, selfe do, selfe haue: many a man thinketh to doe another man a shrewd turne, and it turneth oftentimes to his owne selfe.

The thirteenth Tale.

There was a man in Cottam that layd a wager with his wife, that she should not make him cuckold: no, said she, but I can: spare not, quoth he, doe what thou canst. On a time she hid all the Spiggots and Fanlets in the house, and she went into her Battery, and set a Barrell abroach, and cryed to her husband and said: I pray you bring me hither a spiggot and a fanlet, or else all the Ale will run out: the good man sought vp and downe, and could find none, Come hither, said she then, and hold your finger

finger in the tap-hole : she pulled out her finger and the good-man put in his. Shee then called to her Taylor, which did dwell at the next doore, with whom she made a blinde bargaine. And within a while after shee came to her husband, and did bring a spiggot and a fanlet with her ; saying, Pull out thy finger out of the tap-hole gentle Cuckold, for you have lost your bargaine. I bestow your heart for your labour, said the good-man : make no such bargaines then said she with me.

The fourteenth Tale.

There was a man of Cottam that had taken a Buzzard, and to the eating of it did bid foure or five Gentlemens servants. The wife had killed an old brood Goose, and she & two of her Gossips had eaten by the Buzzard, and the old Goose was layd to the fire for the Gentlemens servants : and when that they were come, and that the old Goose was set before them; What is this then, said one of the men? The good man said : A good fat Buzzard. A Buzzard, said they, it is an old Goose, and thou art a knave to mocke us, and in great anger they departed out of his house and went home. The fellow was sorry that the Gentlemens

ser.

servant were angry, and did take a bagge and
 did put in the Buzzards feathers, and thought
 to goe to them, and shew them the feathers of
 the Buzzard, and so to please them. The wife
 prayed her husband ere he went, to seth in a
 blocke to the fire, and in the meane space he
 did pull out all the Buzzards feathers, and did
 put in the Goose feathers: the man taking his
 wallet or bagge, went to the Gentlemens ser-
 uants, and said, pray you bee not angry with
 me, for you shall see here that I had a Buzzard;
 for here be the feathers: and he opened his bag,
 and did shake out all the Goose feathers. The
 Gentlemens servants seeing the Goose feathers
 said: Why, thou knaue, couldest thou not be con-
 tented to mocke vs at thine owne house, but art
 come to mocke vs here? The one took a waster
 in his hand, and did giue him a dozen stripes,
 saying, Take this for a reward, and hereafter
 mocke not vs any more.

The xv. Tale.

There was a young man of Cottam, the
 which should goe wooing to a faire maid:
 his mother did warne him beforehand; saying,
 when thou dost looke vpon her, cast a shewes
 eye, & say, how doe you sweet pige net? The fel-
 low went to the Butchers, and bought seven

eight shepes eyes, and when this lusty tower
 did sit at dinner, hee would looke vpon his faire
 wench, and would cast in her face a Sheepes
 eye saying, how doest thou my pretty pigs nie?
 How doe I (said the wench) swines face: why
 dost thou cast the Sheepes eye vpon me? O
 sweet pigs nie, said he, haue at thee another, I
 desie thee swines face. saith the wench. The selo
 low being abashed, said, what sweet pigs nie be
 content, for if thou doe liue vntill the next yere,
 thou wilt be foule Some walke knaue walke,
 said she, for if thou liue till the next yere, thou
 wilt be a starke knaue, a lubber and a foole.
 Here a man may see that for a mans good will,
 he shall haue euill will and displeasure.

The xvj. Tale.

A Mans wife of Cottam was brought a
 bed of a Man-child: the father did bid the
 Goddips, the which were children of eight or
 nine yeres of age. The eldest childs name that
 should be Godfather was named Gilbert, the
 second child was named Humfrey, and the Gods
 mothers name was Christabel. The friends
 of them did admonish them, saying, that diuers
 times they must say after the Priest. When
 all were come to the Church doore, the Priest
 said, Be you agreed of the name? Be you, said

B

Gilbert

Gilbert agreed of the name : We you said Humfrey agreed of the name : We you said Christabel agreed of the name : the Priest said, wherefore be you come hither : Gilbert said, wherefore be you come hither : Humfrey said, wherefore bee you come hither : Christabel said, wherefore bee you come hither : The Priest being amazed could not tell what to say, but whistled and said wheew. Gilbert whistled & said wheew. Humfrey whistled and said wheew. and so did Christabel. The Priest being angry said, goe home foles, goe home. Goe home foles, goe home, said Gilbert. Goe home foles, goe home, said Humfrey. Goe home foles, goe home, said Christabell. The Priest then provided new Godfathers and Godmothers. Here a man may see that children can doe nothing without good instructions. And they bee not wise that will regard childrens words.

The xvij. Tale.

There was a man of Gotten the which should bee married : and when the day of marriage was appoynted, and the time came that they should be married together, the Priest said, Say after me : the man said say after me : the Priest said, say not after me such words, but say after me as I will tell thee. The fellow said, say

say not after me such words, but say after me as I will tell thee. The Priest said thou doest play the foole and the knaue, to mocke with this holy Sacrament of Matrimonie. The fellow said, Doest thou play the foole and the knaue, to mock with this holy Sacrament of Matrimonie. The Priest could not tell what to say, but sayd, what shall I doe with this foole? The fellow said, what shal I do with this foole. Farewell said the Priest, I will not marry thee: Farewell said the fellow, I will not marry thee. The Priest departed, howbeit the fellow by other men was instructed how to doe: after that, hee was married. And I heard say, such a foolish pranke was played at Kingstone of late dayes.

The xviij Tale.

There was a Scottissh man, the which did dwell at Gottam, & hee had taken a house, little from London, and of it hee would make an Inne, and to his Signe hee would haue a Bores-head. And hee went to London to haue a Bores-head made: Hee did come to a Caruer or a Joyner, saying in his mother tongue, I say, spoake, canst thou make me a Bare-head: Yea said the Caruer. Then said the Scottissh man make me a Bare-head anonst Poule, and thoue haue twenty pence for thy hire. I will

doe it said the Caruer. On S. Andrews day be-
 fore Christmas, the which is named Poule in
 Scotland, (and in England in the North) the
 Scottish man did come to London for his Wozes
 head, to set it at the doore for a signe. I say speak
 said the Scottishman, hast thou made the bare-
 head : Hea said the Caruer, then thouse a geude
 fellow. The Caruer went and did bring a mans
 head of wood that was bare, and said sir, here is
 your bare-head, I say, said the Scottishman,
 the mickle Diuell is this a bare-head : Hea said
 the Caruer, I say, said the Scottishman, I will
 haue a bare-head, sicke an head as doth follow a
 Sew that hath Gyces. Sir, said the Caruer. I
 cannot tell what is a Sew, nor what is a Gyce.
 What herson kenst thou not a Sew, that will
 greet and grone, and her Gyces will run after
 her and cry awake, awake. Oh said the Caruer
 it is a Pig. Hea said the Scottishman, let me
 haue his fathers head made in timber, and make
 me a bird, and set on her scalpe and cause her
 sing whip whir, whip whir. The Caruer said
 I cannot cause her to sing whip whir. What
 herson said the Scottishman, gar her as she
 should sing whip whir.

Here a man may see, that euery man doth
 delight in his owne senses, or doth reioyce
 in his fantasie.

The xix Tale.

In old tyme when these aforesaid iests were
 (as men of the Countrey reported) and such
 fantasticall matters were done at Gottam,
 which I cannot tell halfe, The wiues were ga-
 thered together in an Alehouse, and the one said
 to the other, that they were profitable to their
 husbands. Which way good Gossips said the
 Alewife? The first said, I shall tell you all good
 Gossips: I can neither bake, brew, nor I can
 doe no worke, wherefoze I doe make every day
 holyday, and I goe to the Alehouse because at all
 times I cannot goe to the Church, and in the
 Alehouse I pray to God to speed well my hus-
 band, and I doe thinke my prayer shall doe him
 much more good, then my labour if I should
 worke. Then said the second, I am profitable to
 my husband in sauing of Candles in winter, for
 I doe cause my husband and all my household
 selkes to goe to bed by day light, and to rise by
 day light. The third wife said, and I am profit-
 able to my husband in spending of bread, for I
 will eate but little: for to the drinkeing of a gal-
 lon or two of good Ale, I care for no meate. The
 fourth wife said, I am loth to spend meate and
 drinke at home in mine olde house, wherefoze
 I doe goe to the wine Tauerne at Pottingham,

and so take wine and such things as God shall send me there. The fift wife said, a man shall haue euer moze company, in another mans house then in his owne, and most commonly in an Alehouse is the best cheare in a Towne : and for sparing of meat and drinke, and other necessaries, I goe to the Alehouse. The sixt wife said, my husband hath Woolle, and Flaxe, and Towe, and to spare it, I goe to other mens houses to doe other mens worke. The seuenth wife said, I doe spare my husbands wood and cole, and doe sit talking all the day by other mens fires. The eight said, Beefe, and Mutton and Porke is deare, wherefoze I doe spare it, and doe take Pigge, Goose, Hen Chicken, Coney, and Capon, the which be of lower price. The ninth said, and I doe spare my husbands Sope and lye : for when he should be washed once in a weeke, I doe wash once in a quarter of a yere. Then said the Ale-wife, and I doe keepe my husbands Ale, that I doe brew, from souering : for whereas I was wont to drinke by all, now I doe leaue neuer a drop.

The xx. Tale.

On Ashwednesday the Priest of Cottam would haue a collation to his Parishioners, and said, Friends, the time is come that
you

you must vse prayer and fasting & almesdees,
and this weeke come you to Chrift, and I will
tell you moze of my mind: for as for prayers, I
thinke there bee not two persons in the Parish
can say halfe their Vater-noster. As for fasting
you fast still: for you haue not a good meales
meate thzough the whole yere. As for almes-
dees, what should you doe to giue any thing,
that haue nothing to take to? But when that
you come to Chrift, I will tell you moze of my
mind after Masse: the good man that did keepe
the Ale-house did come to Chrift, and aboue all
things he confessed himselfe to be drunke diuers
times in the yere, specially in Lent. The Priest
said, in Lent thou shouldest most refraine from
drunkenness, and abstaine from drinke.

Not so said the fellow, for it is an old Pro-
uerbe, that fish must swim, yea said the Priest
it must swim in water: I cry you mercy quoth
the fellow, I thought it should haue swum in
good Ale.

So one after another the men of Cottam did
come to Chrift, and when they were Chzinen, the
Priest said, I cannot tell what penance to giue
you. If I should enioyne you to prayer there is
none of you that can say your Vater noster, and
you be now too old to learne. And to enioyne you
to fast, it were but foolishnesse, for you doe not
eate

eate a good meales meat in a yēre, wherefoze I
 doe enioyne thee to labour well all the wēke,
 that thou maist fare well to dinner on the Sun-
 dayes, and I will come to dinner and see it to be
 so and take part : another man he did enioyne
 to fare well on Munday, and another the Tews-
 day, and one after another, that one or other
 should fare well once a wēke, that hee might
 haue part of meat. And as for Almes-deedes
 the Priest said : you be but beggers all,
 except it be one or two, there-
 foze bestow your almes
 on your selues.

(***)

FINIS.

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